



# City of EL MONTE

FALL 2014

## Children's Day Parade and Harvest Festival Attracts Thousands

Filled with music, dancing and resounding cheers, the 20th annual Emily Ishigaki Children's Day Parade and Harvest Festival celebrated the City's youth and the former councilwoman for whom the event is named.

The parade kicked off with a proclamation presented to the family of Emily Ishigaki, who worked for the City for 43 years before being elected to the City Council in 2003. Ishigaki, who was instrumental in creating the parade, passed away this year.

"I'm sure Emily is looking down upon us and smiling," her husband, Ron, told a large crowd before the parade started.

The parade and festival celebrates youth from local school districts by providing them a forum to showcase their talents. Children from City community organizations such as sports, cheer, gymnastics and martial arts joined marching bands in the parade down Tyler Avenue.

This year, the City welcomed Grand Marshal Vera Jimenez, an Emmy Award-winning journalist.

The Harvest Festival at Arceo Park included giveaways, performances by parade participants, carnival rides, bouncers and a pumpkin carving contest.

Parade sponsors included Encore Sponsor King Taco; Corporate Sponsor Valley Vista Services; Platinum Sponsors Royal Coaches, KPRS Construction and Wayne Clayton Foundation; and Gold Sponsors El Monte/South El Monte Chamber of Commerce, Olivarez Madruga, El Monte Police Officers' Association, Southern California Edison and Southland Transit.



## El Monte Students Receive Supplies to Start School Prepared

*Community comes together to provide thousands of school supplies to local families*

The El Monte community rallied to support children preparing for their first day of school by providing free backpacks, haircuts and supplies at the Third Annual Back to School Resource Fair Aug. 23 at the Valley Mall.

The event, open to children who attend El Monte schools, provided 300 haircuts, 1,500 pairs of socks, 1,500 backpacks and school supplies.

A highlight of the event included Rescue 5, one of five surviving fire trucks from the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks. Rescue 5 is a moving museum that travels the country as a memorial. The "Shakey Quakey" earthquake simulator was also available to teach kids how to respond during an earthquake.



The City of El Monte partnered with the Downtown El Monte Business Association, El Monte/South El Monte Chamber of Commerce, Professional Institute of Beauty, and El Monte Union High School, El Monte City and Mountain View school districts, as well as valued community organizations/businesses to host the Fair.

The City would like to thank those who provided donations.



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11333 Valley Blvd.  
El Monte, CA 91731



## Haunted Spooktacular Provides a Ghoulish Evening

The spookiest time got a lot more eerie as the El Monte Parks, Recreation and Community Service Department hosted its annual Haunted Spooktacular on Oct. 30 at the El Monte Community Center.

Held in conjunction with the El Monte Police Department's Trunk or Treat event, Haunted Spooktacular featured a haunted house, food booths, arts and crafts, game booths, face painting, a bouncer and photo opportunities with Halloween characters.

Residents were also able to buy the VIP Cemetery Package, which included a taco dinner, admission and fast pass to the haunted house and transportation and tour of Savannah Cemetery, the oldest non-sectarian cemetery in Southern California.

## El Monte Celebrates Poinsettia Development with Ribbon Cutting

The City of El Monte held a ribbon-cutting ceremony on Thursday, Aug. 7 for the newest residential development in the City, Poinsettia Development, which represents the type of high-quality housing developments currently being approved by the City. With the project's developer, VM Investments, the ribbon-cutting ceremony was a time to celebrate the project, which includes eight custom, two-story homes.

The development, at 12327 Poinsettia Ave., utilizes contemporary craftsman, Mediterranean and traditional Americana architecture-style homes. Each home varies from 1,900 to 2,200 square feet of living area with spacious backyards and balconies. A private access driveway serves all eight homes.

Prior to acquisition by VM Investments, this 60,722-square-foot property was a vacant, blighted site. The City Council is proud to continue to welcome quality development to the community. This is one of the first examples of a housing development under the new design guidelines approved by the City Council.

## New Leadership Team Boasts Experience, Talent to Move City Forward

*Five new administrators appointed to key positions*

The City of El Monte has placed five qualified and experienced leaders in key City positions that are charged with bolstering economic development, maintaining the City's infrastructure, overseeing its finances and ensuring City employees receive top-notch training and work in a safe environment.

### **Assistant City Manager Gabriel Gonzalez**

has 19 years of diverse local government and private sector experience, 10 of which have been as City Manager for three California cities. He is a proven leader in all facets of city operations, with a successful track record

of leading organizations undergoing challenging financial and operational transformations, while maintaining a service-oriented approach to the delivery of efficient and effective public service programs. Mr. Gonzalez holds a bachelor's degree in business administration and a master's in public administration and is a member of the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) and has earned the designation of Credentialed Manager.



*Public Works Director Frank Senteno, left, Finance Director Ernestine Jones, Assistant City Manager Gabriel Gonzalez, Human Resources/Risk Management Director Deborah Scott-Leistra and Economic Development Director Minh Thai.*

**Economic Development Director Minh Thai** is a 26-year resident of the San Gabriel Valley and has been professionally involved in municipal planning and community development for more than 20 years. Mr. Thai is a graduate of Cal Poly Pomona College of Environmental Design, where he earned a bachelor's degree in urban and regional planning. Before joining the City as a planner in 2000, Mr. Thai worked for public agencies and private sector firms, specializing in community planning, transportation planning, community design, environmental assessment and community development.

**Finance Director Ernestine Jones** brings a solid mix of public and private sector experience to the City. With more than 15 years of experience in governmental and municipal accounting and finance, Ms. Jones is an active member of both the California Society of Municipal Officers and California Municipal Treasurers Association. Before coming to El Monte, Ms. Jones worked for the cities of Laguna Woods and Irvine. Jones — who earned a business degree from Auburn University and a master's degree in business management from Webster University — is also a Certified Public Finance Administrator and Certified Public Finance Investment Manager. She volunteers her time and talents to her church and the Parent Teacher Association at her children's school.

**Public Works Director Frank Senteno** has been professionally involved in public works construction and engineering for more than 30 years. He is a registered civil engineer and graduate from Long Beach State, where he earned a bachelor's degree in civil engineering and a master's degree in public administration. Prior to joining the City as Public Works Director, Mr. Senteno worked as an associate engineer and public works director for the City of Hermosa Beach; for private sector firms specializing in water/wastewater, land development and structural design; and for general engineering contractors specializing in the construction of public works infrastructure.

**Human Resources Director Deborah Scott-Leistra** is originally from Oklahoma and is a graduate of the University of Tulsa. With more than 25 years working in the human resources field, Ms. Scott-Leistra's experience spans both private and public sectors. In the past, Ms. Scott-Leistra worked as the Human Resources/Risk Management Director for the City of Redlands and spent nearly eight years working with the City of Ontario. Her areas of expertise include employee/labor relations, human resource policy design and implementation, recruitment and selection, compensation and benefits, training and development, employment and labor law compliance, workers compensation, safety, risk management and team building.



## El Monte Continues to Make Gains to Restore Fiscal Stability

*City prioritizes economic development and financial stability in FY 14-15 Budget*

After weeks of working collaboratively with City staff, community members and residents, the El Monte City Council unanimously voted on June 24 to adopt a balanced budget for the 2014-2015 fiscal year. The adopted budget is consistent with the City Council's directive to control cost while pursuing new revenues.

The City Council directives are in response to the City's ongoing structural deficit and its efforts to recover from state budget challenges. The adopted General Fund operating budget totals \$57.1 million – in addition to \$6.4 million toward the Enterprise Fund budget, which includes water and sewer operating and maintenance expenses -- for a total City budget of \$63.5 million.

Faced with a \$2.9 million budget deficit, City staff identified ways to balance the budget through a combination of prior year carry-over, personnel cost-savings, and draw-down from fund balance. However, this budget would not be possible without Measure GG revenue. For this, the City thanks its residents for their continued support, allowing the City time to proactively plan for a fiscally sustainable future.

Measure GG, the half-cent sales tax measure re-authorized by the voters in November 2013, is expected to generate approximately \$4.2 million in sales tax. In addition, revenue grew from increased sales and property tax income. While the regional economy is lagging, El Monte is making great strides in its economic recovery.

Therefore, the budget includes a modest increase in the Economic Development Department budget for additional employees to assist and facilitate the streamlining of major development projects. This investment will help the city increase future revenues and/or generate new sustainable revenues.

The City has also made a commitment to perform a comprehensive assessment of the City's financial condition. The City Council recently approved a consultant contract to perform this assessment through the preparation of a Fiscal Sustainability Plan (FSP). The FSP will be developed and completed within the first six months of FY 14-15. Until the recommendations of the FSP are available, the FY 14-15 budget continues to maintain service levels at the current FY 13-14 levels. It is anticipated that the City will begin implementing the FSP recommendations with the FY 14-15 mid-year budget review.

El Monte has made significant progress following the state's serious financial crisis. However, the City continues to be diligent in making smart spending decisions. Through a disciplined, collaborative approach with City Councilmembers, employees, community-based organizations, businesses and residents, the City will move progressively toward fiscal stability and sustainability.

## El Monte Moves to New Technology for Job Applications

*Job seekers can now easily apply with new online system*

The City launched a new software system to improve the hiring process for job seekers and personnel managers. Employment candidates are able to quickly apply online via the City's website [www.ci.el-monte.ca.us](http://www.ci.el-monte.ca.us). Interested candidates can apply for vacancies or sign up for notification of new openings in desired employment areas.

This new software streamlines job search and application processes for job seekers; candidates can now submit multiple applications electronically as paper applications will no longer be accepted. Applications can be accessed from any computer with internet access.

With the new system, administrative work and technical maintenance costs are reduced. The City Council is committed to finding ways to use technology to make services more efficient.



## El Monte Events

### Holiday House and Gingerbread House Contest

**Date & Time:**

Saturday, December 6  
9:00 a.m.-7:00 p.m.

**Location:**

El Monte Community Center and the Jack Crippen Multipurpose Senior Center (3120 & 3130 Tyler Ave.)

### Hilton Garden's Groundbreaking Ceremony

**Date & Time:**

Thursday, December 11  
10:30 a.m.

**Location:**

9920 Valley Blvd., El Monte

### Miss Friendly El Monte/ South El Monte Beauty Pageant

**Date & Time:**

Saturday, December 13  
6:00 p.m.

**Location:**

El Monte High School Auditorium  
3048 Tyler Avenue, El Monte

### City Council and Successor Agency Meeting

**Date & Time:**

Tuesday, December 16  
7:00 p.m.

**Location:**

Council Chambers  
11333 Valley Blvd., El Monte

### El Monte/South El Monte Chamber of Commerce Teddy Bear Mixer

**Date & Time:**

Wednesday, December 17  
5:30 p.m.

**Location:**

Grace T. Black Auditorium  
3120 N. Tyler Avenue, El Monte

### El Monte Promise Foundation 11th Annual Tamalada

**Date & Time:**

Thursday, December 18  
5:30 p.m.

**Location:**

Grace T. Black Auditorium  
3130 N. Tyler Avenue, El Monte

### 1st Annual New Year's Eve VFW Fundraiser Dance

**Date & Time:**

Wednesday, December 31  
8:00 p.m.-1:00 a.m.

**Location:**

VFW Post 10218  
11126 Ramona Blvd., El Monte

# New Street Signs Help Beautify El Monte

El Monte residents can continue to be proud of the City’s image as new street name signs have been upgraded. This noticeable change is aimed at helping residents and visitors navigate around town a bit easier.

The City of El Monte Public Works Maintenance staff has been hard at work installing more than 1,400 new street sign poles throughout the City to swap out existing signs that were in poor condition, not compliant with federal regulations and in need of replacement.

The installation of these new street signs will help emergency responders and residents more easily identify street names and block numbers. While the new signs boost curb appeal, more importantly, they address public safety and federal compliance concerns.

In January 2008, the Federal Rule on Sign Retroreflectivity went into effect to ensure city street-name signs were compliant with the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). The MUTCD states that all new street signs must be made with retroreflective surfaces to reflect light emitted from automobile headlights.

In addition to improving retroreflective visibility, the new street-name signs feature larger lettering to increase visibility for drivers and are supported by newly designed decorative poles. City maintenance staff also removed poles that were cylindrical, galvanized or made from wood and replaced them with poles made of unistrut, which is formed from metal sheet and shaped to provide additional support and allows for easier mounting.



# El Monte Hosts Summer Concerts, National Night Out

From July 16 to Aug. 6, the City of El Monte hosted a successful concert series that thousands of residents enjoyed on those hot summer nights at Arceo Park.

Ray Carrion and the Latin All-Stars kicked off the series on July 16, followed by 1980s tribute band Neon Nation on July 23 and Los Pistoleros on July 30.

On the last night of the series on Aug. 6, residents enjoyed music, reveled in prizes and learned more about its public safety team when the El Monte Police Department and El Monte Parks and Recreation Department hosted National Night Out.

National Night Out – a nationwide effort to promote crime prevention, foster police-community partnerships and create neighborhood camaraderie— brought together the residents of El Monte and the Police Department at Arceo Park in an effort to create a united front against crime.

A performance by Los Angeles-based band TEASE kept everyone dancing with their rare blend of everything from Top 40 and R&B to merengue and salsa, while police officers were on hand to highlight the various units that make up the EMPD.



## Save the Date

## 43rd Annual Holiday House and Gingerbread House Contest

Saturday, Dec. 6 | 9:00 a.m.-7:00 p.m.  
El Monte Community Center and the Jack Crippen Multipurpose Senior Center (3120 & 3130 Tyler Ave.)

### City Council

**André Quintero**  
Mayor

**Bart Patel**  
Mayor Pro Tem

**Juventino “J” Gomez**  
Councilman

**Norma Macias**  
Councilwoman

**Victoria Martinez**  
Councilwoman

**Jerry Velasco**  
City Treasurer

**Jonathan Hawes**  
City Clerk

### City Directory

#### City Hall Services

City Manager’s Office..... (626) 580-2001  
City Council ..... (626) 580-2001  
City Attorney ..... (626) 580-2010

#### Economic Development

Administration ..... (626) 580-2090  
Code Enforcement ..... (626) 580-2080  
Economic Development  
Department ..... (626) 580-2249  
Valley Vista Services ..... (800) 442-6454

#### Finance

Administration ..... (626) 580-2023  
Business License..... (626) 580-2031  
Water ..... (626) 580-2024

#### Human Resources

Administration ..... (626) 580-2040

#### Parks & Recreation

Administration ..... (626) 580-2200  
Aquatic Center..... (626) 580-2213  
Community &  
Senior Services ..... (626) 580-2210

#### Museums

El Monte Historical Society ..... (626) 580-2232  
La Historia ..... (626) 279-1954

#### Public Safety

Administration ..... (626) 580-2101  
Emergency Fire/Police..... 911  
Fire Department  
L.A. County..... (626) 974-8371

Information/Patrol ..... (626) 580-2110  
Community Relations..... (626) 580-2186

#### Public Works

Administration ..... (626) 580-2058  
Transportation  
Division ..... (626) 580-2217  
MTA Bus Passes ..... (626) 580-2242  
Dial-a-Ride..... (626) 307-3224  
Trolley Information..... (626) 943-1200  
MTA Bus Information ..... (800) 266-6883

El Monte Library  
(Tyler/Asher) ..... Closed for Renovations  
Norwood Library  
(Peck/Emery) ..... (626) 443-3147  
Animal Control ..... (626) 962-3577